



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



MEDIA RELEASE

Volunteer firefighters' bravery honoured on St Florian's Day

4 May 2015

Two firefighters who braved dangerous conditions in a fuel tanker accident at Mona Vale were among 21 NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) members and 17 units presented awards by Minister for Emergency Services David Elliott MP today as part of St Florian's Day celebrations.

Minister Elliott thanked all serving firefighters and volunteers who continue to follow in the footsteps of St Florian (Patron Saint of Firefighters).

"Each year on this day we take the opportunity to thank our NSW RFS volunteers for their ongoing hard work and commitment to protecting our communities," Mr Elliott said.

"The people of NSW should be rightly proud of the efforts of their NSW RFS volunteers, who respond day after day to a variety of emergencies, both here in NSW and interstate.

"Among those being recognised are Joshua Denney and Gary Sambridge, who both faced significant risks when they attended a fuel tanker crash at Mona Vale in 2013.

"Power lines were down, several vehicles were already on fire and a number of people had already been injured by a flowing fuel fire coming from the overturned tanker.

"Despite the dangerous environment, these men worked together, attacking the fire with foam to protect the injured, members of public and other emergency service personnel who were under direct threat from the flowing fuel fire.

"Many of the volunteers being recognised today will tell you that it's all in a day's work but nonetheless, they're deserving of the community's recognition and gratitude."

NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said a number of recipients received their awards for important behind-the-scenes work such as planning community engagement strategies.

"The NSW RFS is a team of hard working, professional and dedicated men and women, fulfilling a variety of roles from frontline firefighters to operational and logistical support," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

"It is particularly pleasing to see some of our members who work behind the scenes in roles such as communications and training other volunteers.

"Their role is critical and today, on St Florian's Day, we recognise the efforts of all of our members and also give thanks to their families, friends and employers whose contribution is just as important."

For full citations, please visit the RFS website www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

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